

Rights Action

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September 2021

Forced migrancy & refugee flight

“Inevitable outcomes of conquest, capitalist globalization and climate change generating mass dispossession worldwide”

—Harsha Walia, *Border & Rule*

Dear friends,

I hope this finds you, your families and communities well. After remaining at home since the on-set of COVID, I travelled fully vaccinated to Guatemala in July and August. My plan to visit Honduras, as well, was postponed due to continuing spread of COVID in both countries.

There is no overstating how hard COVID has impacted the lives of the majority populations of Honduras and Guatemala.



The facemask does not cover hunger and misery

The governments in power provide virtually no health support, a very small number of vaccines, and no financial support to their majority populations.

At the same time, these governments continue to support full operations in all sectors of the global economy: mono-crop food production, mining, dams, maquiladora sweatshops, etc. Ensuring supply chains of products to consumers and profits to shareholders and investors (mainly in North America and Europe) remain priorities for the ruling elites of both countries and their global political and economic partners.

Your Funds At Work

As of September 1, 2021, Rights Action has sent over \$225,000 of your donations and grants to partner organizations, communities and individuals, mainly in Guatemala and Honduras, in support of their human rights and justice struggles, their land and environmental defense struggles, and their emergency and disaster response work. (More information about the work of our partners is available on request)

- Supported organizations, communities and individuals: <https://orb-banjo-lnsy.squarespace.com/s/2021-Funding-Summary-91.pdf>

(continued)

TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS:

Make checks payable to “Rights Action” and mail to the appropriate US or Canadian office.

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(Box 552)
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Scott Wright
Camila Rich

GET INFORMED/ GET INVOLVED

Speakers: Invite us to give presentations about these issues

Educational Delegations:

Form your own group or join one of our educational-solidarity delegation seminars to Guatemala and Honduras to learn more about these issues and struggles

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On the Road, with Rights Action

I was invited to visit longtime partner groups in Baja Verapaz, Izabal and Santa Rosa, courageously pushing forward with community defense and justice struggles, with sustainable community agricultural projects, and with emergency response work.

ACPC re-building sustainable communities in the aftermath of genocide, in the age of increasing environmental harms and climate heating

- <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/acpc-re-building-sustainable-communities-in-aftermath-of-genocide>

Q'eqchi' plaintiffs in landmark Hudbay Minerals lawsuits remain resolute, 11 years and counting

- <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/maya-qeqchi-plaintiffs-resolute-in-hudbay-minerals-lawsuits>



Women from the village of Lote 8 and Angelica Choc travel from El Estor to Rio Dulce, for our first face-to-face meeting since March 2020. Wheelchair bound German Chub arrived separately by car. After lunch, we had a virtual meeting with lawyers Murray Klippenstein and Cory Wanless to update the 13 plaintiffs on the (slow but steady) progress of the landmark Hudbay Minerals lawsuits.

Diario Militar war crimes trial

In Guatemala City, I met with FAMDEGUA (Family members of the disappeared) and other lawyers working courageously on a number of war crimes trials and current day human rights/justice struggles. Most recently, FAMDEGUA is spearheading – together with a national and international network of surviving family members, supporters and lawyers – the Diario Militar war crimes trial, investigating high ranking officers with the Guatemalan armed forces for the kidnapping, torture, sexually violating, assassinating and/or disappearing of 183 individual cases of forced disappearances.

Justice in Guatemala for “Death Squad dossier” war crimes trial

- <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/justice-in-guatemala-for-death-squad-dossier-war-crimes>

This most recent war crimes trial has a chance of achieving a measure of justice for the government practice of kidnapping and disappearing an estimated 45,000 Guatemalans, going back to the early 1970s, spiking in the early 1980s and into the 90s.

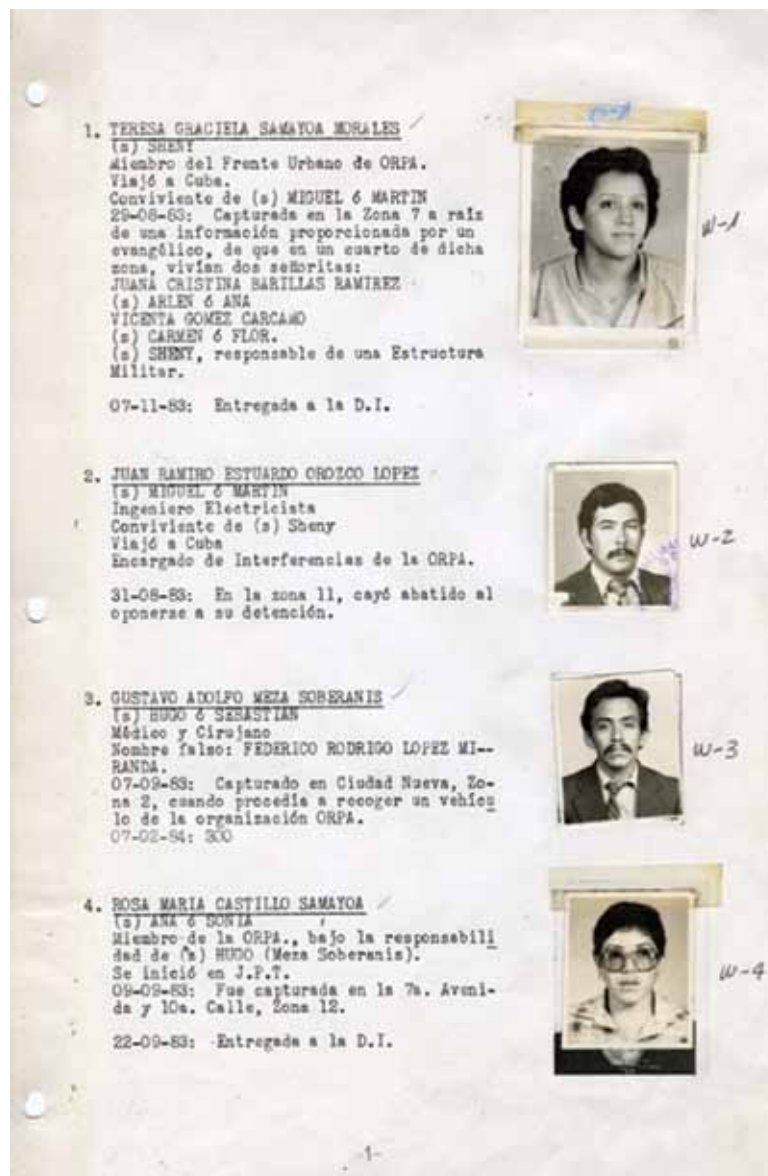
U.S. and Canadian-backed regime pushes back

One day before I met with two courageous (and nervous) members of FAMDEGUA, the government of President Giammattei oversaw the forced ouster of Juan Francisco Sandoval, Guatemala’s top anti-corruption prosecutor, who was forced to flee the country. This illegal move to reinforce systemic impunity and corruption follows on threats against and the forced exile of other honest judges and public prosecutors, all of which follows upon the forced shutting down of CICIG, the International Commission Against Impunity in Guatemala, in 2018 and 2019.

Guatemalan anti-corruption prosecutor flees into exile: “I can now say that everything [Attorney General Consuelo] Porras has done is shady”

- <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/guatemalan-anti-corruption-prosecutor-flees-into-exile>

Guatemala remains a dangerous place for land and environmental defenders, and human rights and justice activists, and a profitable place for global food-export, mining, hydro-electric energy and garment ‘sweatshop’ companies.



Page from Guatemalan military’s “Death Squad Dossier”.

<https://nsarchive2.gwu.edu/NSAEBB/NSAEBB15/dossier-color.pdf>

“Border & Rule”

by Harsha Walia

Rights Action recommends Harsha Walia’s book about forced migrancy and refugee flight across the planet

More information: <https://fernwoodpublishing.ca/book/border-and-rule>



Over the past 26 years of our work in Guatemala and Honduras, Rights Action has denounced the systemic local-to-global injustices, inequalities and violences that force so many people to flee into exile year after year, decade after decade. Articles and reports in our Forced Migrancy archives (<https://rightsaction.org/forced-migrancy-archives>) contrast mainstream media coverage in the U.S. and Canada, that will not report on the real underlying causes, and independent reporting that delves into how historic and on-going policies and actions of the U.S. and Canadian governments, of global banks, companies and investors, contribute directly to the underlying causes of forced migrancy and refugee flight from Honduras and Guatemala.

As Harsha Walia explains in *Border and Rule*, most mainstream “representations depict migrants and refugees as the ‘cause’ of an ‘imagined’ crisis at the border, when, in fact, mass migration is the ‘outcome’ of the ‘actual’ crises of capitalism, conquest, and climate change.”

“A long arc of dirty colonial coups, capitalist trade agreement extracting land and labor, climate change, and enforced oppression is the primary driver of displacement from Mexico and Central America.”

A few reviews:

“Harsha Walia offers an unsparing analysis of the violences of forced migration, borders, imperialism and capitalism.”

— Mariame Kaba, founder, director of Project NIA

“This beautifully written book is the most in-depth global analysis of borders and immigration, wars and displacement, imperialism and western white nationalism. Always paying close attention to the people whose lives are wrecked or lost, Walia demands action and offers real solutions.”

— Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, author of *An Indigenous Peoples’ History of the United States*

“This book is a comprehensive demolition of the borders that divide us and a deft takedown of the myth of the nation.”

— Astra Taylor, author of *Democracy May Not Exist, but We’ll Miss It When It’s Gone*

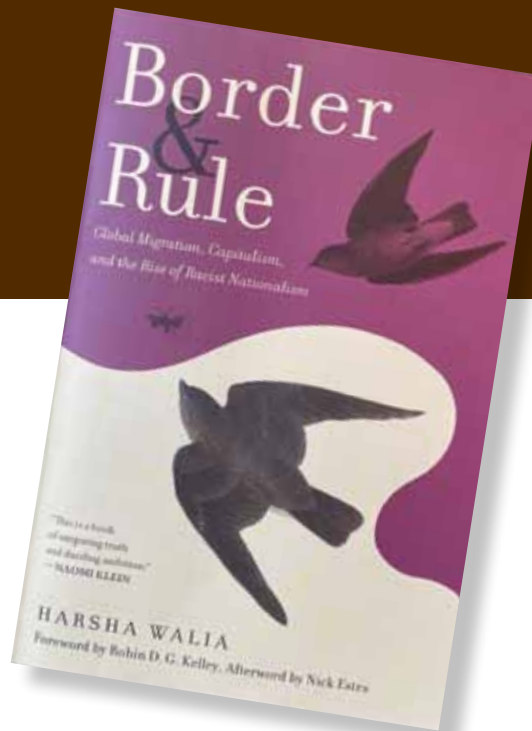
“Every once in a while there comes a book that makes you never see the world the same way again. Harsha Walia’s *Border and Rule* is such a book, laying bare the border apparatus like no other: its bloody history based on colonial dispossession, Indigenous genocides, anti-Black enslavement, and its contemporary function of maintaining - with militarized enforcement of divisions - a racialized global system of subjugation and exploitation rife with criminal inequalities and ecological catastrophes.”

— Todd Miller, author of *Empire of Borders: The Expansion of the U.S. Border Around the World*

et, in our unjust, unequal Nation State system.

“Harsha Walia explains clearly and concisely the multiple forces causing global poverty and displacement ..., an excellent explanation of borders, migration and the exploitative systems that produce both.”

— Victoria Law, author of *Resistance Behind Bars: The Struggles of Incarcerated Women*



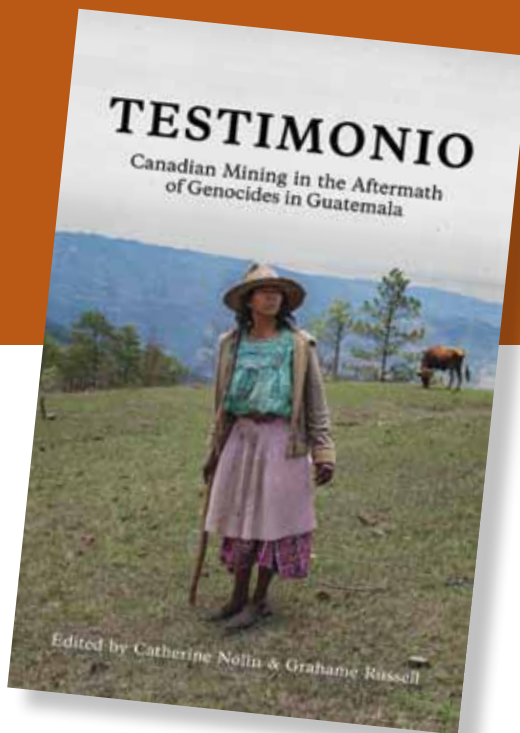
Testimonio: Canadian Mining in the Aftermath of Genocides in Guatemala

Publication date, October 25, 2021

<https://btlbooks.com/book/testimonio>

Testimonio, edited by Catherine Nolin and Grahame Russell, fits squarely within what *Border and Rule* addresses across the planet. Global mining operations in Guatemala and Honduras (dominated by Canadian companies) contribute directly to forced migrancy and refugee flight, resulting from the displacement, violence and harms caused by the companies. *Testimonio* looks closely at four separate mining operations in Guatemala: Goldcorp Inc. (Glamis Gold); Hudbay Minerals (INCO, Skye Resources, Solway Investment Group); Pan American Silver (Tahoe Resources); and KCA (Radius Gold).

Testimonio will be published October 25, 2021 by Between The Lines publishers. Managing editor Amanda Crocker said “Part of what this book’s editors demonstrate in the book is that violating human rights, using repression, and acting with corruption and impunity is how the Canadian-dominated mining industry has operated in Guatemala.” (<https://quillandquire.com/omni/between-the-lines-to-publish-mining-book-dropped-by-nature-springer-over-libel-chill/>)



Honduras: Edwin Espinal and other political prisoners face criminal charges for activism in defense of human rights and democracy

As friends of Rights Action may remember, Karen Spring worked with Rights Action from 2008-2013, before heading up the work of the newly formed Honduras Solidarity Network. As set out here by Karen, she will continue with the same work and activism she has been doing from Honduras, but her work will be 'housed' in Rights Action again, as she considers the next steps in work and life.

Karen writes:

"As of September 1, 2021, I will leave my role as the Honduras-based Coordinator for the Honduras Solidarity Network (HSN). I will embark on a year of transition and exploration in collaboration with US and Canadian organization, Rights Action, while continuing my human rights and activist work in Honduras.

"During this transition, I will continue to participate in the HSN as a platform for Honduras-related campaigning. Based in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, I will continue with the work I have been doing over the past 12+ years of supporting social movements, human rights groups, and community-based organizations.

"My partner Edwin Espinal along with political prisoner Raúl Alvarez will go to trial, beginning September 13 and 14, to face trumped up charges stemming from the 2017 elections crisis – elections violently and fraudulently stolen by the corrupt, U.S. and Canadian-backed government lead by President Juan Orlando Hernandez.

"These arbitrary detentions and abusive legal processes have not been easy for the families of the 23 political prisoners imprisoned in the aftermath of the 2017 electoral crisis. I hope to count on your support until all Honduran political prisoners are freed, able to return to their families, and continue with their lives.

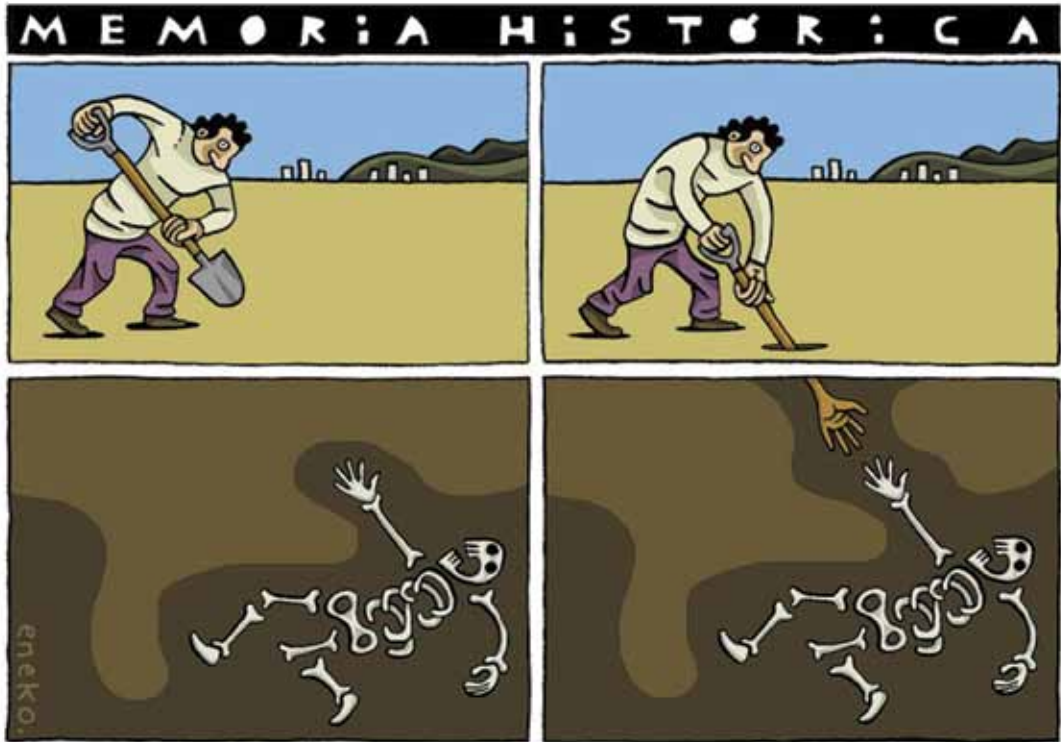
"This is even more essential now, as the Juan Orlando Hernandez regime continues to send more and more of his opponents to prison. Many political prisoners' trials are scheduled to take place over the next few months, rights as Hondurans go to the polls on November 28 for the 2021 general elections."

For more information:

spring.kj@gmail.com

Follow her work:

Twitter: [@hondurasnow](https://twitter.com/hondurasnow), Instagram: [@hondurasnow](https://www.instagram.com/hondurasnow), aquiabajo.com & hondurasnow.org



Historic memory

Exhuming remains of Indigenous victims of genocide – Guatemala to Canada

Rights Action offers these reports addressing the needs for mass grave exhumations of Indigenous victims of genocide in Canada, and comprehensive truth telling and justice processes.

No more apologies. Now is a time for justice. Former Residential School should be declared crime scenes

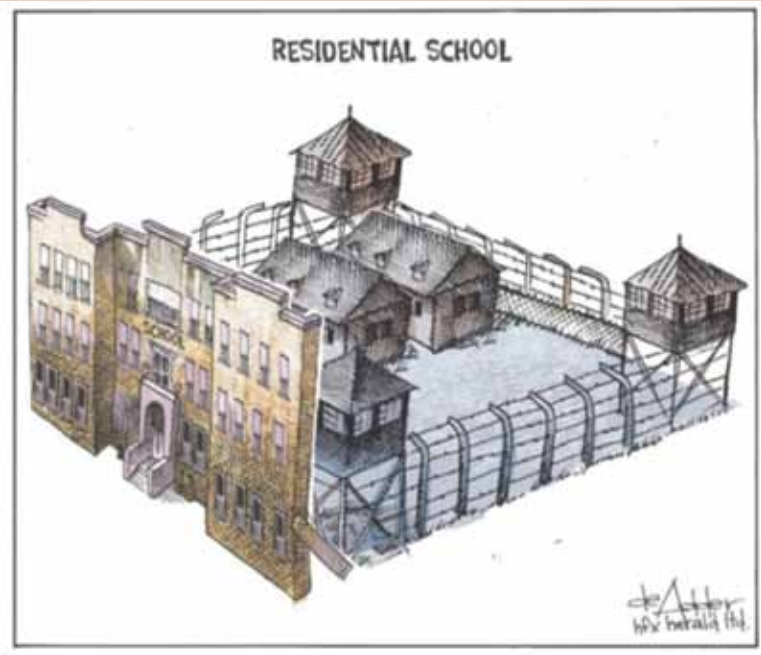
- <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/residential-school-should-be-declared-crime-scenes>

“Canada Day” homework assignment: “Stealing Children To Steal The Land”

“Stealing Children To Steal The Land”, a report from The Intercept and hosted by Naomi Klein, should be required listening/reading for Canadians.

- <https://mailchi.mp/rightsaction/canada-day-homework-assignment-stealing-children-to-steal-the-land>





“Washing one’s hands of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless means to side with the powerful, not to be neutral.”

—Paolo Freire

*“Action is the mother of hope”
“Accion es la madre de la esperanza”*

—Pablo Neruda

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